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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL
783RD MEETING
NOUAKCHOTT, MAURITANIA
30 JUNE 2018

PSC/AHG/COMM.(DCCLXXXIII)

COMMUNIQUÉ

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The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU), at its 783rd meeting held in Nouakchott, Mauritania, on 30 June 2018, at the level of Heads of State and Government, adopted the following decision on the situation in the Republic of South Sudan:

Council,

1. **Takes note** of the statements made by the Chairperson of the PSC, President of Sierra Leone, H.E Julius Maada Bio and Chairperson of the AU Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat. Council further **takes note** of the presentations made by the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ambassador Smail Chergui and the briefing by the AU High Representative for South Sudan, former President Alpha Konare. Council also **takes note** of the statements by the representative of Ethiopia, in its capacity as Chair of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the President of Sudan, H.E. Omar Hassan Al-Bashir, the representative of the South Africa, in its capacity as Chairperson of the AU Ad Hoc Committee for South Sudan;
2. **Recalls** its previous communiques and press statements on the situation in South Sudan, particularly communique PSC/AHG/COMM(DCXXVI), adopted at its 720th meeting held on 20 September 2016 in New York, at the ministerial level and communiqué PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCLI) adopted at its 751st meeting held on 8 February 2018, as well as communique [PSC/PR/COMM.(DCCLXVIII)] adopted at its 768th meeting held on 26 April 2018;
3. **Commends** the efforts deployed by the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Heads of State and Governments, namely H.E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic Ethiopia, H.E. Ismail Omar Guelleh, President of the Republic of Djibouti; H.E. Uhuru Kenyatta, President of the Republic of Kenya; H.E. Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed, President of the Republic of Somalia; H.E. Salva Kiir Mayardit, President of the Republic of South Sudan; H.E. Omar Hassan al-Bashir, President of the Republic of Sudan; and H.E. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda for their continued engagement in search for a lasting solution to the conflict in South Sudan and **encourages** them to sustain their engagement;
4. **Recalls** the establishment of the African Union High Level Ad Hoc Committee for South Sudan in 2014, which comprises Algeria, Chad, Nigeria, Rwanda and South Africa to scale up AU support to the IGAD-led peace process. Council **expresses its deep appreciation** for the involvement of the Ad Hoc Committee, under the chairmanship of South Africa, in the efforts to end the war in South Sudan, through its continued support to the IGAD-led mediation process. In this regard, Council **urges** the Ad Hoc Committee to continue pursuing and further intensify its engagement and support to the IGAD-led mediation process;
5. **Stresses the imperative** of the Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities, Protection of Civilians and Humanitarian Access (CoHA) getting full translated into a permanent ceasefire as agreed in the Khartoum Declaration Agreement and **commends** the AU Ad hoc Committee for its engagement to promote a permanent ceasefire in South Sudan;

6. **Expresses appreciation** for the relentless efforts deployed by the AU High Representative for South Sudan, former President Alpha Omar Konare and **urges** him to continue, working together with the IGAD and the UN. Council also **applauds** the continued engagement by former President Festus Mogae, Chairman of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (JMEC), as well as the efforts of the IGAD Special Envoy, Ambassador Ismail Wais;
7. **Recalls** the IGAD Council of Ministers decision of 12 June 2017 at its 31st Extraordinary Session authorizing the Council “to urgently convene a High Level Revitalization Forum (HLRF) of the parties to the ARCSS, including estranged groups to discuss concrete measures, to restore permanent ceasefire, undertake full implementation of the Peace Agreement and develop a revised and realistic timeline and implementation schedule towards democratic election at the end of the Transition Period”. Council **underscores, once again**, the fact that the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (ACRSS) remains an acceptable compromise that holds the key to decisively address the problems of South Sudan, taking into account the aspects that are to be revitalized through the IGAD-led HLRF;
8. **Acknowledges** that the HLRF provides a window of opportunity to address the persistent challenges facing the people of South Sudan, especially governance and security issues. Council **commends** the successful conduct of the HLRF and **expresses appreciation** for the inclusive manner in which the process was conducted, thereby enabling all Parties to the ARCSS, including the estranged groups and other South Sudanese Stakeholders, Faith-Based Groups, Civil Society Organizations, women and youth, to participate in the process. In this context, Council **underscores the urgent need** for further strengthening confidence building measures, with a view to addressing the trust deficit amongst the South Sudanese parties. In this context, Council stresses that inclusivity in the conduct of the peace process is crucial for acceptability of its outcomes by the South Sudanese people. In this regard, Council **recognizes the importance** of an inclusive National Dialogue process in the country as it also allows for the participation of all groups in seeking a lasting solution;
9. **Welcomes** the face-to-face talks held on 20 June 2018 between President Salva Kiir Mayardit and Dr. Riek Machar Teny under the auspices of the IGAD Chairperson, H.E Dr Abiy Ahmed Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Council further **welcomes** the communiqué of the 32nd Extraordinary Session of the IGAD Assembly of Heads of State and Government on South Sudan held on 21 June 2018, in Addis Ababa, which, among other aspects, decided that a face-to-face meeting between Presidents Salva Kiir Mayardit and Dr. Riek Machar, take place in Khartoum and in Nairobi, with a view to scaling up the momentum of the process, including for finalization of the negotiation on the Revised Bridging Proposal by IGAD. Council also **welcomes** the subsequent meeting held in Khartoum under the auspices of President Hassan Al Basher of Republic of Sudan and attended by President Yoweri Museveni of the Republic of Uganda, at which the South Sudanese parties signed the Khartoum Declaration Agreement on 27 June 2018;
10. **Welcomes the commitment** by the Parties to make progress on the Revised Bridging Proposal and **urges** them to conclude this process very urgently to address issues of power sharing and security arrangements. Council further **welcomes** the Agreement on the 36 months transitional period that shall be preceded by a pre-transitional period of 120 days. In this regard,

Council **notes** that the implementation of the Khartoum Declaration Agreement paves the way for continued implementation of the peace process within the extended transition period. Council **underscores the need for** the parties to faithfully implement their commitments to avoid further conflicts and **calls on** the parties to fully honor the commitments to prepare for the general elections that shall be open to all South Sudanese political parties. Council therefore **encourages** all political and military leaders to work together and mobilize the people of South Sudan to end the conflict;

11. **Welcomes** the reunification process of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), spearheaded by the Republic of Uganda and the Arab Republic of Egypt, that is aimed at contributing to the reconciliation of the leaders of South Sudan and facilitate creation of an environment conducive for peace and security. In this context, Council **commends** the efforts deployed by Presidents Yoweri Museveni and Abdel Fattah el-Sisi in facilitating the SPLM reunification process;

12. **Commends** the invaluable work done by the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission (JMEC) and the Ceasefire Transitional Security Arrangement Mechanism (CTSAMM) to ensure compliance with signed agreements. In this respect, Council **calls on** the TGoNU and all armed movements to fully cooperate with CTSAMM in the discharge of its mandate and **underscores** that any obstruction to the work of CTSAMM shall be deemed as a violation of the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (ARCSS) and measures shall be taken to this effect;

13. **Expresses** support to the CoHA signed by all Parties and Stakeholders on 21 December 2017. Council **welcomes** the Declaration of a Permanent Ceasefire, based on the CoHA, as outlined in the Khartoum Declaration Agreement and **urges** all the South Sudanese parties to respect the permanent ceasefire in order to create a conducive political and security environment for the implementation of all other agreements signed by the Parties. Meanwhile, Council **expresses concern** over the continued violations of the CoHA, including those that took place following the signing of the June 2018 Khartoum Declaration Agreement;

14. **Underscores, once more**, that there can be no military solution to the conflict in South Sudan and **condemns**, in the strongest terms possible, the repeated violations of the CoHA by the parties as reported by the CTSAMM and JMEC. Council **urges** CTSAMM and JMEC to be vigorous and provide evidence that is verifiable in order for appropriate punitive measures to be taken in line with paragraph 20 of the communique of its 720th meeting held in New York, on imposition of punitive measures against persistent violators of the signed Agreement;

15. **Expresses deep concern** over the dire economic situation in South Sudan, which inhibits the Government's ability to provide for the needs of the population. In this context, Council **underscores** that such a situation, if not addressed urgently and decisively, poses the risk of undermining the gains made thus far through mediation. Council therefore **urges** the South Sudanese Parties to urgently and faithfully implement the June 2018 Khartoum Declaration Agreement regarding the rehabilitation of oil fields, working with the Government of Sudan, in order to help address the prevailing economic difficulties;

16. **Expresses deep concern** over the deplorable humanitarian situation in South Sudan and **urges** all the South Sudan parties to ensure unimpeded humanitarian corridors and access, and guarantee safety of humanitarian workers. Council **calls on** all Member States and international partners to continue providing support to the people of South Sudan to alleviate their suffering and assist the TGoNU in rebuilding various governmental institutions to ensure stability and provision of services to the population, while coordinating and harmonizing their support with a view to ending the conflict and achieving lasting peace in South Sudan. Council **further notes with appreciation** the continued interventions of the humanitarian actors engaged to save vulnerable lives in South Sudan, and **condemns** all acts of violence meted against them and **warns** all those who will commit such acts that they will be held accountable;

17. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.

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